



**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES**

**DEVAL L. PATRICK**  
GOVERNOR

**TIMOTHY P. MURRAY**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**IAN A. BOWLES**  
SECRETARY OF ENERGY  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

**ONE SOUTH STATION**  
**BOSTON, MA 02110**  
(617) 305-3500

**PAUL J. HIBBARD**  
CHAIRMAN

**W. ROBERT KEATING**  
COMMISSIONER

**TIM WOOLF**  
COMMISSIONER

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CONTACT: Lisa Capone  
(617) 626-1119  
Robert Keough  
(617) 626-1109

**Department of Public Utilities to Launch Investigation of  
Utilities' Response to December 12 Ice Storm**

*Department will initiate probe in response to Governor Patrick's request*

BOSTON – The Department of Public Utilities (DPU) today announced it will conduct an investigation into efforts by the state's electric utilities to restore power following this month's damaging ice storm. Launched in response to Governor Deval Patrick's request, as well as concerns expressed by Attorney General Martha Coakley and area legislators over Fitchburg residents who have been without electricity for a week and a half, the DPU's comprehensive inquiry will cover what companies did to prepare for the December 12 storm, and their implementation of emergency storm plans.

"The first order of business is for utilities to restore power to all of their customers," DPU Chairman Paul Hibbard said. "Once that is complete, the DPU will take an in-depth look at utilities' performance during the storm and in the aftermath, and consider what they could – and perhaps should – have done better to avoid prolonged power outages in some parts of the Commonwealth."

The DPU will issue requests for information and documents, and intends to conduct a series of public hearings to take first-hand testimony from utility managers, elected officials, and residential and business customers. In addition, customers will have an opportunity to file written comments with the DPU, which will become part of the official record of the proceeding. Complaints may be filed through the DPU Consumer Division's online Complaint Form by email to [consumer.complaints@state.ma.us](mailto:consumer.complaints@state.ma.us); by mail to DPU, Consumer Division, One South Station, Suite 2, Boston, MA 02110; or by fax to 617-478-2591.

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